Press Release

Transporting Heavy Loads Easily and Professionally

Despite all the progress of digitalisation, at the end of every manufacturing process, the IG units, structural elements, or pieces of glass still have to be shipped, safely and efficiently, to their destination. And the options available for logistics are just as varied as the requirements for transporting these typically heavy, bulky goods. According to Managing Director Hans-Peter Löhner from HEGLA Fahrzeugbau, not too long ago vehicles in the sector were typically only equipped with an external rack: “Companies that require more flexibility, additional loading positions, and want to impress their customers with an optimally organised vehicle can use additional fittings to customise their delivery vehicle to their specific needs.”

Van with industry-typical fittings as universal solution

For rush installations, special pieces of glass, and small delivery quantities, vans with a total weight of 3.5 or 6 tons have proven to be a one-size-fits-all solution. Equipped with a customised exterior rack, this vehicle type can be used for many of the logistics tasks that arise. User-friendly, height-adjustable crossbars secure the load correctly on the transport rack, providing the necessary security even for elements that extend above the top of the vehicle. If additional support is required, this can be provided with integrated lashing rails and lashing straps, for example. A lateral inclinometer indicates during loading and unloading whether or not the glass is positioned with appropriate tilt. If an external rack with quick-removal option has been fitted, this can be removed for van maintenance or for private trips, and it can also be used on other vans.

And for users who plan to regularly transport high-value goods that require extra protection such as mirrors and shower walls, Hans-Peter Löhner recommends an interior rack so the glass can be protected from environmental influences. In this case, the version with a folding support offers maximum flexibility. When the support is folded upward, almost the entire cargo space is accessible for windows, structural elements, etc. An optional, countersunk hole pattern enables the use of padded tie rods so that other loading positions are available as a supplement to the rack or an alternative to an interior system.

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Tool cabinet system for tidiness and appearance

In his consultations, the HEGLA managing director almost always advises customers to install a tool cabinet system. “If you deliver professionally, you will also work professionally,” is how he assesses the impression it makes on end customers. And well-ordered systems have proven their worth when vehicles are used by several installation teams. “Everything has a place, everyone knows where it is, and this makes work easier for all those concerned,” explains Löhner. “It looks good on the construction site too.”

For larger jobs

For transport tasks that exceed the loading options or load capacity of a van, trucks with a total weight of 12t or 18t are the vehicle of choice. These trucks are used especially for distribution transport. Compared to using forwarding agents, they improve customer contact and proximity, and they also help to improve service. Different fitting versions are available when upgrading to a glass-industry-specific truck. They define the vehicle’s subsequent options, flexibility, and efficiency with regard to its later use.

After extensive customer consultation, the vehicle will be built from scratch on the basis of the basic truck model. In most cases, the vehicle receives a flatbed in which a specially developed C-profile is embedded. Using these profiles, transport frames and glass boxes of various sizes can be fixed in diverse positions on the flatbed with clamping shoes or box supports, in compliance with specifications. For flexible loading and unloading, a crane can be installed, adjusted, and inspected in accordance with the legal stipulations.
If the vehicle has an on-board crane, the delivery driver can access the frame at all times and does not have to rely on a crane at the delivery site that may or may not be available. Industry expert Löhner advises his customers to select remote control when selecting their crane equipment in order to ensure greater safety and simplified handling. “It is much easier for drivers to load and unload when they have an overview

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of the entire situation and do not have to rely on commands from other people who are eight or ten metres away," he said.

External rack as an additional, easily accessible loading position

The truck's options are completed by an external rack. Extremely large elements that would fill and make ineffective use of the flatbed can be carried safely and accessibly on an external rack. The operator has a direct view of the load situation here, making it much more practical in the case of large items. Thanks to the option to split the load between the flatbed and the rack, the vehicle offers greater overall flexibility.

Further optional fittings are available for customer-specific adaptations. For example, the load can be protected against rain and damage from stones by covering the rack partially or fully with a tarpaulin. It is also possible to cover the entire load area with a tarpaulin or an easy-to-operate, protective Edscha cover. Hans-Peter Löhner believes that a consultation is essential for determining what makes sense and is expedient on a case-by-case basis. "One of the most difficult tasks for fleet managers is to equip vehicles in such a manner that a solution is available for virtually any logistics problem that can arise."

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Image 1: Ideal for rush installations, small delivery quantities, and for delivering high-value, special pieces of glass: A transporter converted for use in the glass industry with a glass rack, roof rack, and interior rack.

Image 2: Practical on the outside and flexible on the inside: Customised conversion with a rack and two-piece folding support, drawers, and a tool cabinet system. The load can either be placed on the rack or propped up against it and fastened.

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Image 3: The rack with a folding support that can provide access to most of the space for structural elements, for example, has been optimally adapted to the vehicle. Tie rods and hole patterns countersunk in the floor and ceiling make it easy to secure the load properly and conveniently.

Image 4: For bigger or heavier loads, a truck is the right choice. A rack with a partial tarpaulin provides extra protection and clearly signals that the load is to be handled with care.

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Image 5: Ready for any logistics challenge: A truck converted for use in the glass industry with a tarpaulin-covered glass rack, remotely controlled crane, and a flatbed specially designed for transporting panes and structural elements.

Image 6: Ready for any logistics challenge: A truck converted for use in the glass industry with a tarpaulin-covered glass rack, remotely controlled crane, and a flatbed specially designed for transporting panes and structural elements.

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